

– ***Remarks*** –

Claims 2-4, 6, 8–15, 17, 20, 21 & 23 are in the case, with Claims 1 (independent claim), 5, 7, 16 (independent claim), 18, 19 & 22 having been canceled in the foregoing amendments, with Claim 8 now being the only independent claim in the case, with all of the other claims being directly or indirectly dependent on it.

On June 27, 2006 the Examiner left a voice message at counsel's office indicating that he was willing to allow independent Claim 8 and dependent Claim 9. It was not clear whether the Examiner had had the chance to fully evaluate and consider in detail the eleven (11) pages of extensive remarks and legal and technical arguments Applicants had made in their previous response back in April, 2006, over two months ago. Applicants' counsel still earnestly believes that the independent Claims 1 & 16 and the claims dependent there were also patentable but for the reasons indicated below, Applicants are deleting these claims **without** prejudice.

In considering this message and in the spirit of moving this particular application, which already has been pending for over two and a half years, as soon as possible to an issued patent, Applicants are deleting the other two dependent claims (1 & 16) **without** prejudice to filing a continuation, divisional or continuation-in-part or other application on the subject matters of one or more or all of the canceled claims and related claims.

As appropriate this amendment also changes the dependency of many of the other claims so that they now directly or indirectly depend on allowable Claim 8 and likewise now should be fully allowed.

Thus, upon further consideration, all of the remaining claims in the case, namely, Claims 2-4, 6, 8–15, 17, 20, 21 & 23, should all be allowed in this application.

It is believed that the application is now in condition for full allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted:



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- Certificate of Filing -

I hereby certify that this Response (Amendment B) is being filed with the United States Patent & Trademark Office via the Web-efs program on this **June 27, 2006**.



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